

Claims

1. A label printing apparatus for printing labels utilizing a supply of label stock including a first side having an associated activatable adhesive thereon and a second side for printing, comprising:
  - a housing;
  - a label stock supply location;
  - a label exit opening through the housing;
  - a label stock path from the label stock supply location to the label exit opening;
  - a print head positioned along the label stock path for effecting printing operations on label stock moving thereby;
  - an activation mechanism positioned along the label stock path for activating adhesive of label stock moving thereby;
  - a controller connected with the print head for effecting printing operations thereof and connected with the activation mechanism for effecting activation operations thereof;
  - wherein the controller is configured to have at least one mode in which:
    - when the controller operates the print head to print a promotion offer on a given portion of label stock, the controller further operates the activation mechanism to prevent activation of adhesive of the given portion of label stock;
    - when the controller operates the print head to print product pricing information on a particular portion of label stock, the controller further operates the activation mechanism to activate adhesive on the particular portion of label stock.
2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the activatable adhesive is a heat activated adhesive and the activation mechanism is a heating mechanism.

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3. The label printing apparatus of claim 1 wherein the controller is operable such that the given portion of label stock and the particular portion of label stock are side-by-side.
4. The label printing apparatus of claim 1 further including a cutter positioned along the label stock path, the controller operable to cause the cutter to produce a separation line between the given portion and the particular portion.
5. The label printing apparatus of claim 1 wherein the given portion of label stock and the promotion portion of label stock are located one following the other.
6. The label printing apparatus of claim 5, further comprising a cutter positioned along the label stock path and operable to produce a separation line between the given portion and the particular portion.
7. A scale including the label printing apparatus of claim 1, comprising:
  - a weighing station for weighing products and producing weight indicative signals,
  - the label printing apparatus of claim 1 integrated with the scale;
  - wherein the controller is connected to receive weight indicative signals from the weighing station.
8. A label printing apparatus for printing labels, comprising:
  - a housing;
  - a supply of label stock including a first side having an associated heat activated adhesive thereon and a second side for printing;
  - a label exit opening through the housing;
  - a label stock path from the supply of label stock to the label exit opening;

a print head positioned along the label stock path for effecting printing operations on the second side of label stock as label stock moves thereby;

a heating mechanism positioned along the label stock path for heating heat activated adhesive during movement of label stock thereby;

a controller connected with the print head for effecting printing operations thereof and connected with the heating mechanism for effecting heating operations thereof;

when the controller operates the print head to print a promotion on the second side of a given portion of the label stock, the controller further operates the heating mechanism to prevent activation of heat activated adhesive on the first side of the given portion of the label stock;

when the controller operates the print head to print product pricing information on the second side of a particular portion of the label stock, the controller further operates the heating mechanism to activate heat activated adhesive on the first side of the particular portion of the label stock.

9. The label printing apparatus of claim 8 wherein the controller is operable such that the given portion of label stock extends only partially across a width of the label stock.

10. The label printing apparatus of claim 9 wherein the controller is operable such that the particular portion of label stock extends only partially across the width of the label stock.

11. The label printing apparatus of claim 10 wherein the controller is operable such that the given portion of label stock and the particular portion of label stock are side-by-side.

12. The label printing apparatus of claim 11 wherein the label stock includes a preformed separation line extending along its length to enable separation of the given portion and the particular portion.

13. The label printing apparatus of claim 11 further including a cutter positioned along the label stock path, the controller operable to cause the cutter to produce a separation line between the given portion and the particular portion.

14. The label printing apparatus of claim 8 wherein the controller is operable such that the given portion of label stock extends entirely across a width of the label stock.

15. The label printing apparatus of claim 14 wherein the controller is operable such that the particular portion of label stock extends entirely across the width of the label stock.

16. The label printing apparatus of claim 15 wherein the label stock includes preformed laterally extending separation lines.

17. The label printing apparatus of claim 15, further comprising a cutter positioned along the label stock path and operable to engage the label stock and produce a separation line between the given portion and the particular portion.

18. A scale including the label printing apparatus of claim 11, comprising:  
a weighing station for weighing products and producing weight indicative signals,  
the label printing apparatus of claim 10 integrated with the scale;  
wherein the controller is connected to receive weight indicative signals from the weighing station.

19. A label printing apparatus for printing product labels and promotion labels on a supply of label stock including a first side having an associated heat activated adhesive thereon and a second side for printing, the scale comprising:

a print head positioned along a label stock path for effecting printing operations on a second side of label stock as label stock moves thereby;

a heating mechanism positioned along the label stock path for heating heat activated adhesive during movement of label stock;

a controller connected with the print head for effecting printing operations thereof and connected with the heating mechanism for effecting heating operations thereof, wherein the control unit operates for production of both product pricing labels and promotion offer labels, when operating to produce a product pricing label the control unit controls the print head to print price information and controls the heating mechanism to activate heat activated adhesive, and when operating to produce a promotion offer label the control unit controls the print head to print promotion information and controls the heating mechanism to prevent activation of heat activated adhesive.

20. The label printing apparatus of claim 19 wherein the heating mechanism is located between the print head and a label exit opening of the label printing apparatus.

21. A scale including the label printing apparatus of claim 19, comprising:  
a weighing station for weighing products and producing weight indicative signals,  
the label printing apparatus of claim 18 integrated with the scale;  
wherein the controller is connected to receive weight indicative signals from the weighing station.

22. A label printing apparatus for printing product labels and promotion offer labels on a supply of label stock including a first side having an activatable adhesive thereon and a second side for printing, the scale comprising:

a print head positioned along a label stock path for effecting printing operations on a second side of label stock as label stock moves thereby;

an activation mechanism positioned along the label stock path for selectively activating adhesive during movement of label stock;

a controller connected with print head for effecting printing operations thereof and connected with the activation mechanism for effecting heating operations thereof, wherein the control unit operates for production of labels including a food product pricing portion and a promotion offer portion, when operating to produce a food product pricing portion the control unit controls the print head to print price information on the food product pricing portion and controls the activation mechanism to activate adhesive associated with the food product pricing portion, and when operating to produce a promotion portion the control unit controls the print head to print promotion information on the promotion offer portion and controls the activation mechanism to prevent activation of adhesive of the promotion portion.

23. A scale including the label printing apparatus of claim 22, comprising:

a weighing station for weighing products and producing weight indicative signals, the label printing apparatus of claim 21 integrated within a housing of the scale; wherein the controller is connected to receive weight indicative signals from the weighing station.

24. The scale of claim 23 wherein the activatable adhesive is activated by heat, and the activation mechanism comprises a heating mechanism.

25. A method for dynamically printing a promotion offer label using a label printing apparatus having a supply of label stock including a first side having an associated heat activated adhesive thereon and a second side for printing, a print head arranged for selectively printing on the second side, and a heating mechanism arranged for selectively heating the first side, the method comprising:

based upon a product code identified to the label printing mechanism, identifying both:

- (i) information to be used in the production of a product pricing label, and
- (ii) characteristics of a promotion offer label to be produced, at least one of the characteristics being a size for the promotion offer label;

producing the product pricing label including printing on the product pricing label and activating heat activated adhesive on the product pricing label; and

producing the promotion offer label in accordance with the size characteristic, including printing on the promotion offer label and refraining from activating the heat activated adhesive on the promotion offer label.

26. The method of claim 25 wherein the promotion offer label is attached with the product pricing label.

27. The method of claim 25 wherein the label printing apparatus includes at least on cutting mechanism for engaging the label stock to produce a separation line therein the step of producing the promotion offer label includes applying the cutting mechanism to the label stock to establish a promotion offer label size corresponding to the identified size characteristic.